

Virginia Army Guard selects top recruiters

The Virginia Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion held its end-of-year boards to name their top performers Oct. 11, 2019, at the Virginia National Guard Sgt. Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia. Staff Sgt. Dustin Haislip was named as the 2019 Rookie of the Year, Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Fretwell was named the 2019 Recruiter of the Year, Master Sgt. Donnie Brizendine was named the 2019 Expert Seven of the Year, and Sgt. Austin Strutz was named the 2019 Active Duty Operational Support Person of the Year.

“The end of the year boards highlight individuals who have dedicated themselves to ‘Growing the Force’ by exuding a high level of effort, duty, and selfless service,” said Sgt. Maj. Stephen H. Kopchak Jr., operations sergeant major for RRB. “The boards are not simply an analysis of their accession numbers alone; we focused on enlistment quality, overall Army and NCO knowledge, physical fitness, and enlistee ship rate.”

Each boarded Soldier was accompanied by a sponsor, who had up to three minutes to present the nominees before the board and to highlight their Soldier’s accomplishments.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/30/14237/>



The Virginia National Guard Recruiting and Retention command team poses alongside the top recruiters and recruiting staff members following a board held Oct. 11, 2019, at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

New 116th IBCT deputy commander and joint staff officers announced

Col. Christopher J. Samulski will be assigned as the new deputy commander of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, according to an announcement made Oct. 17, 2019. Samulski replaces Col. Russel E. McGuire who is moving to be the J5 joint strategic plans officer on the Virginia National Guard Joint Staff, and Col. Charles B. Martin, Jr. will become the J3 joint operations officer.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/17/14259/>

91st Cyber Brigade’s fifth battalion to be stationed in Indiana

The fifth battalion of the 91st Cyber Brigade will be stationed in Indianapolis, Indiana, according to an announcement made Oct. 22, 2019, by Lt. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, the director of the Army National Guard.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/23/14257/>

192nd Maintenance Squadron welcomes new commander

Lt. Col. Michael R. Gosma assumed command of the 192nd Maintenance Squadron Oct. 5, 2019, at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/30/14254/>

State and VNG leaders join ESGR statement of support signing ceremony

Dominion Energy and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve held a statement of support signing ceremony between Oct. 17, 2019, in Richmond, Virginia, pledging support to employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/30/14230/>

Join the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard or the Virginia Defense Force

For information about joining the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard or Virginia Defense Force, visit the appropriate link below:

Va. Army National Guard

<http://nationalguard.com/va>

Va. Air National Guard

<https://www.192fw.ang.af.mil/join>

Va. Defense Force

<http://vdf.virginia.gov/joinvdf/>

Join the Virginia Army National Guard Alumni Network

<https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/vngan/>

Va. Soldier among top in ARNG Honor Guard

Staff Sgt. Jason Cain, a Virginia National Guard Soldier assigned to the 29th Infantry Division Band who serves with the Virginia National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program, was the second runner up in the inaugural Army National Guard National Honor Guard Soldier of the Year competition and was honored by Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Kepner, the National Guard Bureau Senior Enlisted Advisor, Oct. 2, 2019, in Arlington, Virginia.

Kepner also recognized Cain as the ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Quarter for the fourth quarter.

"Being able to represent the state of Virginia within the state on a daily basis is a great honor," Cain said. "To be able to represent Virginia on a national level is one of the highlights of my career."

Each of the four Soldiers of the quarter were invited to the National Capital Region to compete for the first-ever ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Year competition. The four Soldiers were selected from more than 3,500 Army National Guard Soldiers serving in the ARNG Military Funeral Honors Program nationwide.

"There are 3,500 full time MFH staff members in the nation, so to be selected is a feeling I will never forget," Cain said. "I remember thinking that this isn't for me- this is for Virginia. So I hope I represented the state well."

Along with the Soldiers from Colorado, Michigan and New York, Cain faced a written exam, a uniform inspection, a drill and ceremony practical exercise, and questions from a formal board.

On the second day the participants were treated to a private tour of Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, 3rd Infantry Regiment "Old Guard" and other related facilities and functions.

The event culminated on the third day with the presentation of the results of the competition and the award ceremony.

Cain was awarded the Army Achievement Medal for being selected as the ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Quarter and a medallion for being the second runner up for the ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Year.

"The staff at NGB did an outstanding job putting the competition together," Cain said. "We were able to go behind the scenes with the staff at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as the Old Guard, and see how they run day to day operations."

Another highlight for Cain was the opportunity to show his father the ins and outs of the program and what being a Military Funeral Honors Soldier entails.

"Each competitor was allowed to bring family members to watch the competition and take all of the tours with us," he said. "It was very special to me to be able to share this experience with my father. Members of the MFH can explain what they do on a daily basis to their families but I don't think they truly understand."

The intent of the ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Year program is to recognize the ARNG Honor Guard Soldiers that epitomize the total Soldier and Honor Guard attribute qualities.



Staff Sgt. Jason Cain (right) is one of four finalists in the ARNG National Honor Guard Soldier of the Year competition Oct. 2, 2019, in Arlington, Virginia.

The ARNG conducts more than 110,000 funeral honors missions per year throughout the United States. ARNG conducts 83% of the Army's funeral honors mission and 42% of the total DoD mission. ARNG Honor Guard Soldiers total approximately five million community interactions per year, making the Honor Guard one of the most visible programs in the Army.

ARNG Honor Guard Soldiers maintain a national standard for conducting funeral honors, log thousands of miles traveling to missions, and train subordinate Soldiers to conduct the mission, all while actively serving in their home units.

"It's amazing that the MFH can have Soldiers from multiple states come together, and there is no question what the standard is," he said.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/29/14222/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Photos: RRB hosts Professor of Military Science Conference

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157711494498622>

Photos: Sec. Hopkins visits Commonwealth Challenge

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157711468947402>

Photos: Normandy Soldiers conduct air assault training

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157711436034508>

VaARNG Recruiting and Retention Battalion on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/JoinVAGuard/>

91st Cyber Brigade on Facebook

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